



# Strategic Vision 2022-2025



## ***Our Purpose:***

Whakamana te maunga, Whakamana te wai, He mauri o ngā tangata, Ngā mea katoa he pai.

*If we look after the water from the mountains to the sea, it will look after us.  
It is our life force.*

## ***Vision:***

The biodiversity of our ocean, coastal areas, streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands is respected as a taonga (treasure). We view these systems with no boundaries. Restoration of any part of the system supports the whole.

## ***Goals:***

To empower and support communities to achieve marine and freshwater conservation through experiential programmes and projects

To contribute towards creating an Aotearoa where:

- Communities now and in the future, are fully engaged with papatūānuku and tangaroa.
- Communities are empowered with support, knowledge, resources, inspiration, and feel valued and capable. Manaaki atu manaaki mai
- The environment of Aotearoa is in balance and has healthy biodiversity and ecosystems. Mana moana mana wai.
- Catchment scale restoration - waterways that are healthy from the mountains to the sea and are; cool, clean, clear, connected to coastlines and have cover, creatures and current. Mauri, Momo, maringi, makariri, marama, maru, moana
- Protecting the mauri (life force) of the ocean. Manaaki mauri moana
- To support communities in their aspirations for Te Taiao.



## ***Guiding Principles:***

- Power of community action
- Relationships central to work
- Empowerment through education
- Kaitiakitanga
- Ability of passion and commitment to create change
- Positive connection with people and place through experiential learning
- Solutions focused

## ***Core Values:***

- Collaboration
- Empowerment and innovation
- Honoring Te Tiriti O Waitangi
- Integrity
- Fun and passion
- Community centered conservation

## ***Our Story:***

Our work started in Northland in 2001, born of the urgent need to develop community awareness of marine and freshwater management issues. We developed dynamic experiential education programmes that engage schools and communities in marine and freshwater conservation. We see education as a vital part of society and central to all environmental restoration.

We have continued to grow rapidly, taking on the challenges of a national expansion of our core programmes Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) and Whitebait Connection (WBC) and a wider span of activities. National expansion is based on a non-profit franchise concept, we have Mountains to Sea providers and networks throughout NZ.

*From the Mountains to Sea, water connects all life on Earth. It is the physical and spiritual bond between humans and nature. Likewise, the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust connects our freshwater (WBC) and marine (EMR) programmes, with iwi, communities and people, webbed into one network for the lasting wellbeing of people and the planet.*





## ***Our Formula:***

effectively communicate marine and freshwater science to NZ communities  
+ involve them in experiencing those environments first-hand and empower them to take action for it = an improved environment and a strong foundational ethic of kaitiakitanga via our core programmes; Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) and Whitebait Connection (WBC).

## ***Tribute:***

The late Dr Roger Grace was an absolute champion for our marine environment. He dedicated his life to marine conservation and tirelessly shared his wealth of knowledge with others. Roger was a trustee of the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust from 2002 – 2018 and an honored patron from 2018.

## ***Our Suite of Programmes:***

- **Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR)** is a national programme of experiential learning about marine conservation. Our EMR - Te Kura Moana programme empowers schools and communities by providing hands-on experience in the ocean.
- **Whitebait Connection (WBC)** is an action based environmental education programme for schools and communities focusing on the health of our streams, rivers and wetlands.
- **National Inanga Spawning project (NISP)** Te Kaupapa Mātauranga Toene Inanga ā-Motu /NISP offers opportunities for local decision-making, community involvement, freshwater research and monitoring, to give understanding and inspire and empower community into action.
- **Drains to Harbour (DTH)** Focuses on local water quality and stormwater pollution sources and results in action to improve these issues.
- **SHMAK Trainers** Are our experts on the ground who can help you with stream health monitoring! The Stream Health Monitoring & Assessment Kit (SHMAK) provides practical tools and resources for land owners, iwi/hapū, schools and community groups to monitor the ecological health of Aotearoa New Zealand's streams.
- **Community Led Initiatives** is about supporting local aspirations for Te Taiao.
  - Local marine conservation projects
  - Community catchment and stream restoration groups



## ***Awards:***

In 2015 Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust was recognised by the Tindall Foundation for making an outstanding contribution to New Zealand with a special award presented by the then Governor General Lt Gen The Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mateparae at Government House.

In 2019 at the Northland Regional Council Whakamānawa ā Taiao – Environmental Awards, Whitebait Connection won Environmental action in water quality improvement. In 2021, Experiencing Marine Reserves won the environmental action in the community and Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust - EMR won the Te Tohu Matua Supreme Award - overall winner!

<https://youtu.be/41OUSSzWSZY>



# Activities and Actions 2022-2025

## ***Structured, Evidence Based Programmes:***

*Whitebait Connection and Experiencing Marine Reserves*

- Source funding for up-to-date programme resources that align with science and the curriculum and are strongly linked to our evaluation
- Maintain programme delivery in existing areas and expand to new regions as resources allow if it fits within our strategy.
- Sustainable funding reported for each region
- Increase in participation in all regions
- Conduct regional support visits - konohi te Konohi and/or virtual meetings to all regions
- Ensure the statistics that our regional providers and coordinators are collecting across NZ are standardized and feeding into a central database.
- Develop more on-line training





## ***Emergent/Community Led Programmes:***

*Community initiated, projects and actions supported by our teams*

- Developed increased capacity within our leadership group in the areas of community engagement and monitoring and support work for conservation projects and outcomes.
- Support a network of interested hapū groups for the Northland and Auckland regions who want to share knowledge, strategies and support one another to advance kaitiakitanga
- Help activate a network of people around Northland and Auckland that are keen to engage.
- Develop a comprehensive database of the groups and resources and a process to follow up and support them if/when required.
- Understand ecosystem health
- Document and share stories that show clear links between our programmes and these community led actions.
- Continue to secure resources to gain more experience and insight to inform the creation of our community led kaitiaki action project support plan and funding applications.
- Continue to evaluate and keep track of emergent/community led programmes/actions/projects.
- Support action projects generated by EMR and WBC around the country and follow-up support activities tied to conservation outcomes and relationship and capacity building in our communities.
- Keep adding to our comprehensive list of these community led actions.
- Explore how we can best support these groups in an ongoing way eg. regional hui, newsletters, professional development, volunteers etc.
- Create more videos showing clear links between our programmes and community led action eg. EMR and Maitai Bay rahui



## ***Conservation Actions and Interventions:***

*Innovative programmes/projects initiated and led by our teams*

- Projects led by our teams will be showing results, possibly dramatic results, in terms of restoration of taonga species and habitats. Tangata whenua and community will be engaged in important and significant conservation and cultural and social outcomes. These projects will become iconic models for community led and hapū based kaitiakitanga and restoration of the mauri of the moana and wai.
- We aim to support a functioning network of kaitiaki leaders and participating hapū in the Northland and Auckland regions. This group in addition to their locally based work will be preparing to represent tangata moana tangata wai in large (regional) scale aquatic protection planning and implementation or may in fact lead this process into the future.
- We will continue to pursue monitoring and research projects in the Northland and Auckland regions that are tied to highlighting threats to the marine and freshwater environments and that support community led initiatives.
- Better understanding of ecosystem health
- Actively share and celebrate innovative programmes and projects across the Aotearoa wide network that are initiated and led by our teams





## ***Partnerships and Collaborations:***

*Supporting and participation in a range of initiatives with other cross sector organisations*

- Our Kaupapa involves a wide range of people that form a network similar to that of a web – people and the environment are at the centre of it all. Every strand and layer woven together makes the web stronger and reach further enabling ripple effects and lasting results.
- Help develop and launch the new **NZ Water Citizens website** and database via an ArcGIS Hub platform with strong QA/QC measures (including a well-developed training programme) and links to regional councils in place.
- Evaluated effectiveness of partnerships and collaborations
- Built capacity in the **existing** Mountains to Sea Regional Provider and Collaborator network to strengthen and augment regional capacity and empower communities.
- Strengthen and further expand the Mountains to Sea Regional Providers. Establish and expand a national collaborator network
- Continue to collect evaluation data on new partnerships gained at our national MTS wānanga events.
- Build regional capacity and empower community.



## By the end of 2025:

- Have **maintained and further developed** the Arc GIS Online NZ Water Citizens Hub.
- Identify, protect and restore (or mitigate) connectivity for freshwater fish habitat (e.g., remediating barriers to fish migration or protecting inanga spawning grounds) at **150 sites**.
- Have a **strong national network** of educators and catchment coordinators across Aotearoa that have worked with 200 catchment groups, hapū or iwi groups and 200 schools.
- Have supported MTSC and regional provider **capacity and capability to maintain the network into the future**.

### *Outputs:*

- Branded programmes with standardized frameworks are scaled up to be delivered in different regions
- MTS providers and collaborator network established and maintained
- Communities initiate and commit to programmes and projects with support from our team
- New conservation actions and interventions are initiated by communities and led by our team (including rangatahi)
- Our teams support and participate in a range of initiatives and people that form a network similar to that of a web— people and the environment are at the centre of it all.

### *Outcomes:*

- Communities who participate in our programmes are empowered with support, knowledge, resources; are inspired, and feel valued; and have the capability to be fully engaged with papatuanuku and Tangaroa now and in the future
- The environment of Aotearoa is in balance with cool, clean, clear, connected waterways with healthy biodiversity and ecosystems
- Communities aspirations for Te Taiao/Moana are supported that protect the Mauri of the oceans



	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Quality</i>
<i>Effort</i>	<p>Number of people participating in programmes has increased</p> <p>Understanding ecosystem health</p> <p>Community and organisation continue to initiate activities and programmes</p> <p>Team initiate new programmes and projects (Love Rimurimu, Marine Mahi for Rangatahi)</p> <p>Collaborate with our regions to strengthen our web</p>	<p>Branded programmes meet quality standards (Adventure Activity Accreditation for EMR)</p> <p>Uptake of MTS programmes increases across Aotearoa</p> <p>Media profile the work of MTS</p> <p>People are reporting a positive experience in feedback</p> <p>Quality improvement or horizontal learning is in place</p> <p>Utilise and promote MM2, Inaturalist, litter intelligence, National advisory for freshwater science, Seaweek</p>
<i>Impact</i>	<p>Community initiated programmes continue after MTSCT support finishes</p> <p>Number of participants and volunteers has increased.</p> <p>Number of participants that then become volunteers has increased</p> <p>Partnerships, and collaborations make strong national web</p>	<p>Participants provide stories and provide feedback that demonstrates personal transformation</p> <p>Participants identify changes in skills, knowledge and confidence as a result of participating in programmes</p> <p>Evaluation demonstrates the connection between programmes and ecological outcomes</p>





## Enablers:

- Ensure capability and capacity of national leadership
- Strengthen our national web - MTS providers and collaborators and partnerships
- Provide tools and inspiration for local led action
- Action that benefits and enhanced ecosystems
- Focus on long term financial sustainability

Indicators of Success (key stats we report against)

- # people taken snorkelling
- # inanga spawning sites ID
- # events delivered nationally #

[www.emr.org.nz](http://www.emr.org.nz)

[www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz](http://www.whitebaitconnection.co.nz)

[www.mountainstosea.org.nz](http://www.mountainstosea.org.nz)

